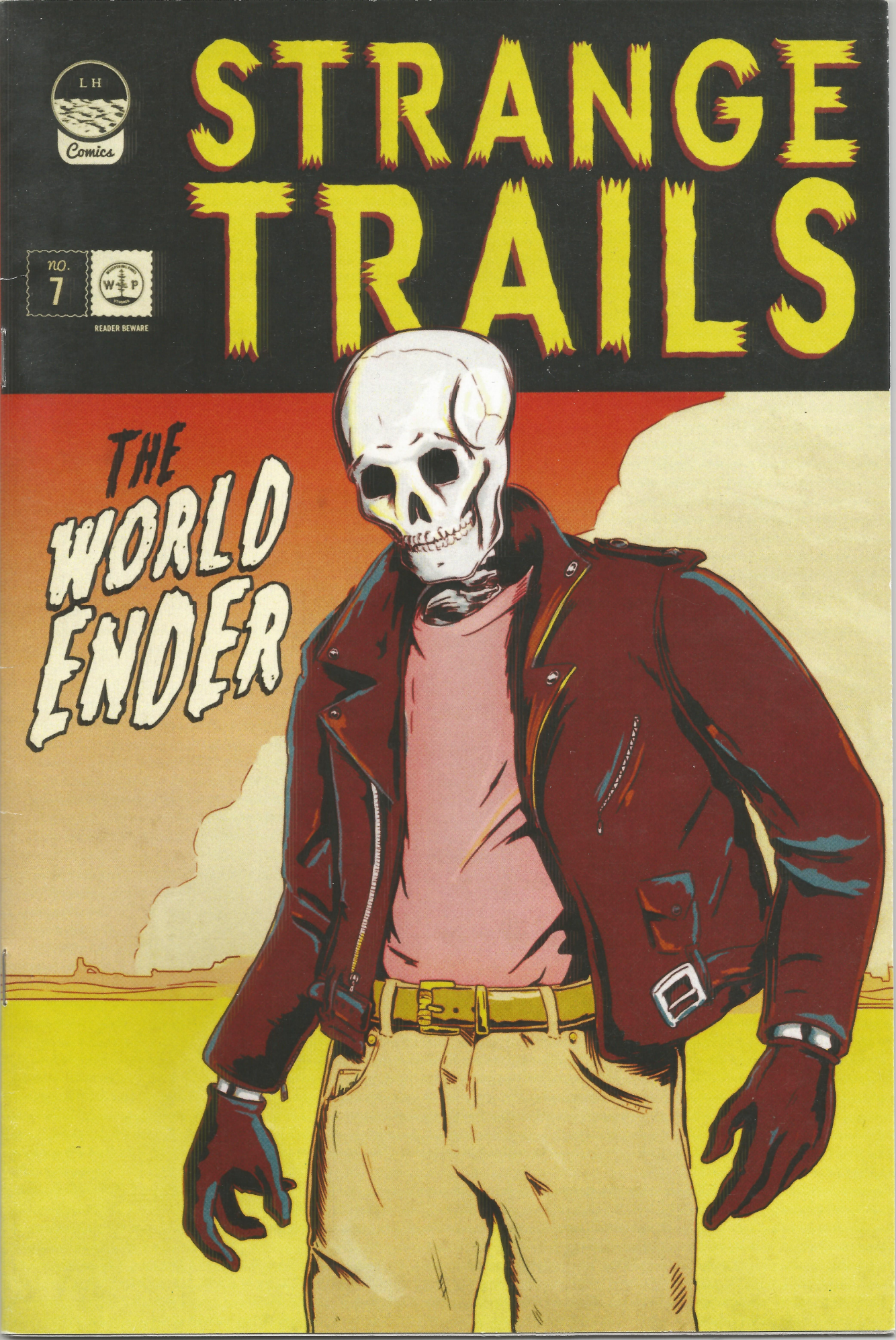
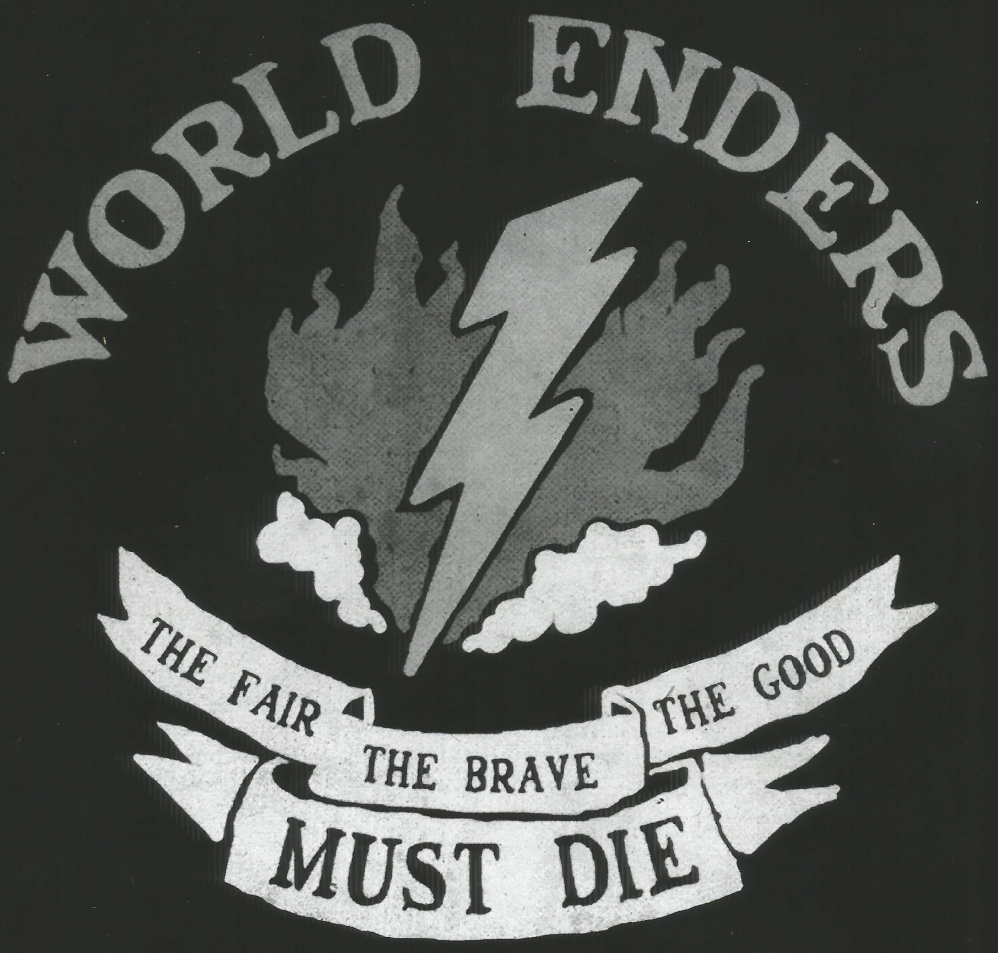

LH
Comics
STRANGE TRAILS
no. 7
READER BEWARE
THE WORLD ENDER



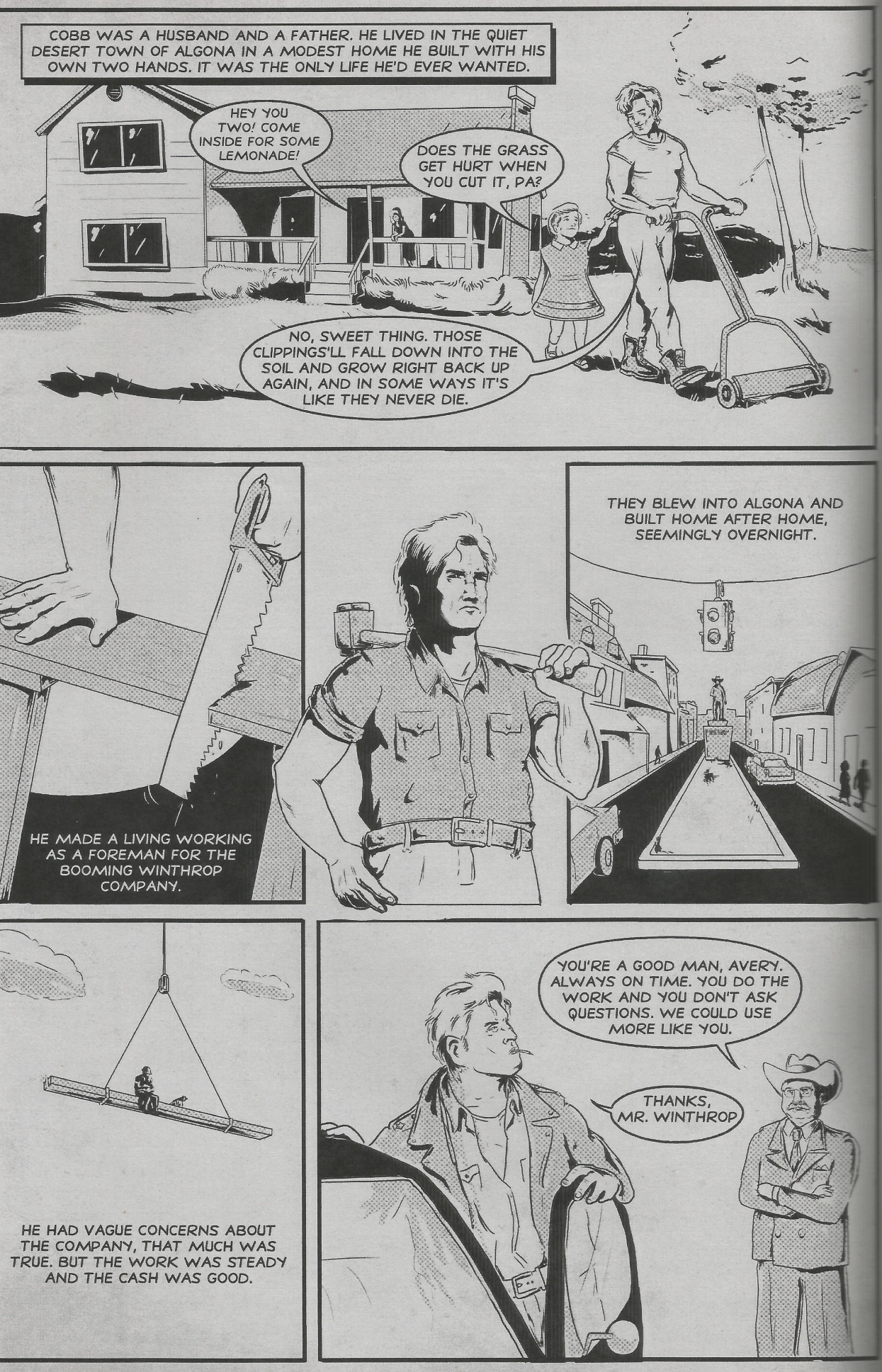
STRANGE TRAILS no.7

"THE WORLD ENDER"

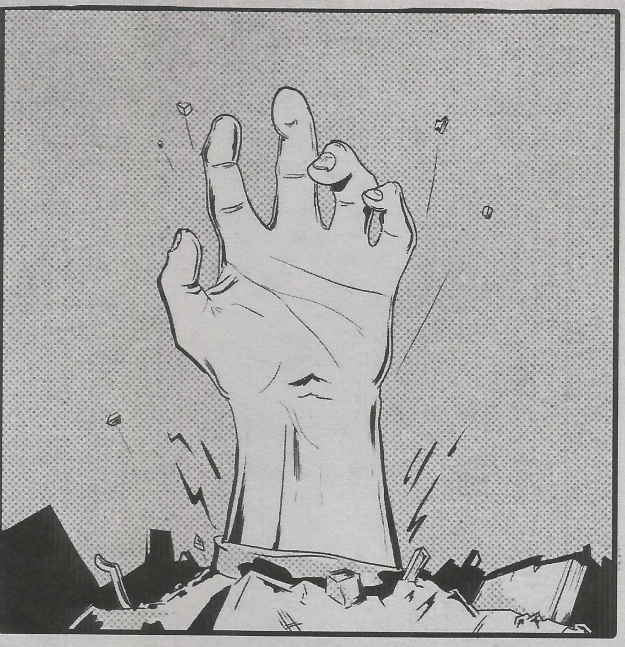
ARTWORK BY TONY WILSON
SCRIPT BY CAITLIN SCHNEIDER AND TONY WILSON
STORY BY BEN SCHNEIDER, CAITLIN SCHNEIDER AND TONY WILSON

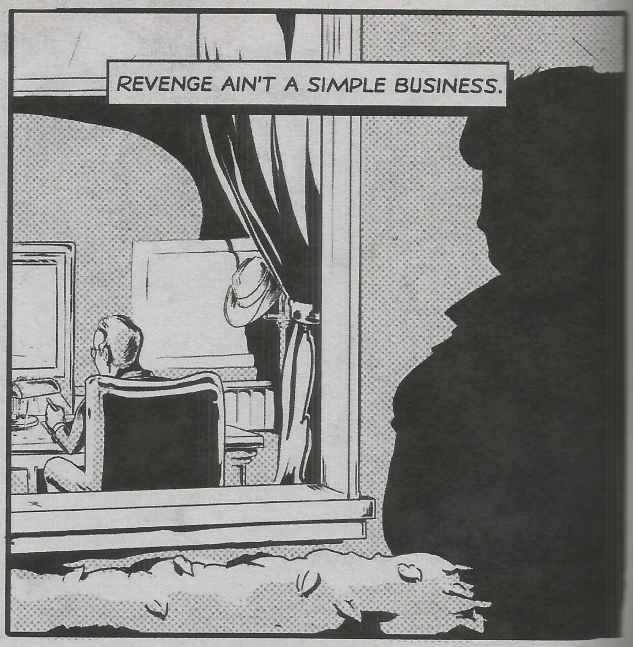
LINES FROM "ANSWER TO A BEAUTIFUL POEM, WRITTEN BY MONTGOMERY" BY LORD BYRON

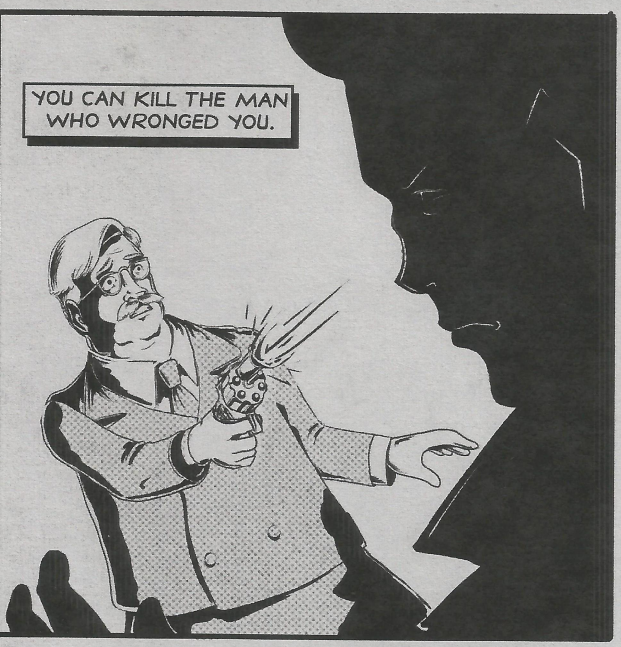
WHEN IT COMES TO COBB AVERY, PEOPLE ARE ALL SORTS OF WRONG. HE'S BEEN REDUCED TO A CLOUD OF NOISE THAT VAGUELY RESEMBLES A MAN.
COBB AVERY WAS NOT AN EXTRATERRESTRIAL.
HE DIDN'T ESCAPE THE LOONEY BIN UNDER A BLOOD MOON.
HE WAS NOT A DEMON BAPTIZED IN THE FIRES OF HELL...
...NOR AN ANGEL CAST OUT OF HEAVEN.
AND LEAST OF ALL...
COBB AVERY WAS NOT 'JUST A MAN.'

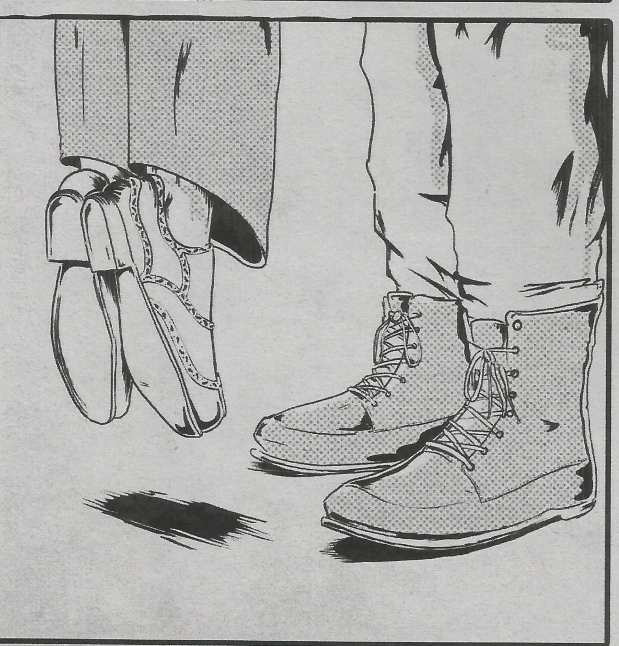

COBB WAS A HUSBAND AND A FATHER. HE LIVED IN THE QUIET DESERT TOWN OF ALGONA IN A MODEST HOME HE BUILT WITH HIS OWN TWO HANDS. IT WAS THE ONLY LIFE HE'D EVER WANTED.
HEY YOU TWO! COME INSIDE FOR SOME LEMONADE!
DOES THE GRASS GET HURT WHEN YOU CUT IT, PA?
NO, SWEET THING. THOSE CLIPPINGS'LL FALL DOWN INTO THE SOIL AND GROW RIGHT BACK UP AGAIN, AND IN SOME WAYS IT'S LIKE THEY NEVER DIE.
HE MADE A LIVING WORKING AS A FOREMAN FOR THE BOOMING WINTHROP COMPANY.
THEY BLEW INTO ALGONA AND BUILT HOME AFTER HOME, SEEMINGLY OVERNIGHT.
HE HAD VAGUE CONCERNS ABOUT THE COMPANY, THAT MUCH WAS TRUE. BUT THE WORK WAS STEADY AND THE CASH WAS GOOD.
YOU'RE A GOOD MAN, AVERY. ALWAYS ON TIME. YOU DO THE WORK AND YOU DON'T ASK QUESTIONS. WE COULD USE MORE LIKE YOU.
THANKS, MR. WINTHROP

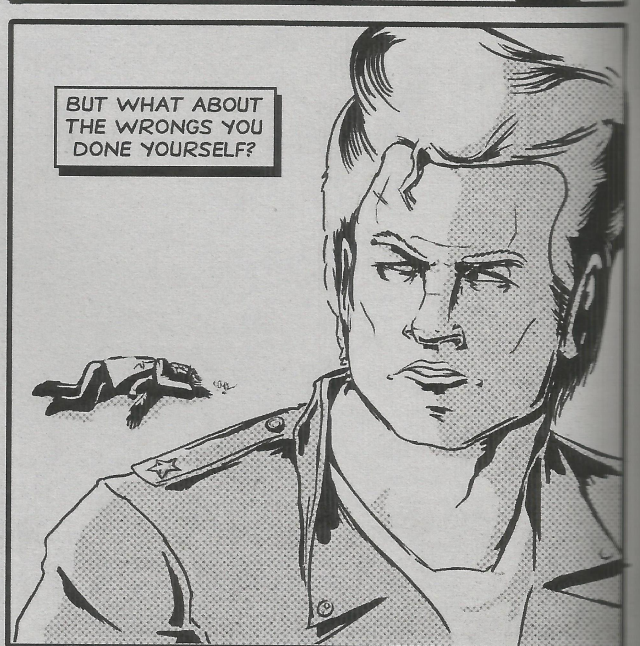
I SUSPECT THERE ARE SOME WHO WOULD SAY THAT ANDREW WINTHROP IS UNDESERVING OF SUCH A DESIGNATION AS "EVIL."
DOES MONEY LUST MAKE YOU EVIL? HOW ABOUT AMBITION?
WHAT IF YOU'LL DO ANYTHING TO GET IT?
COBB DIDN'T ASK FOR THE LAND DOCUMENTS WHEN THE WINTHROPS GAVE HIM THE PLOT FOR HIS HOME.
IF HE HAD, HE WOULD'VE KNOWN ABOUT THAT SLEEPING SINKHOLE.
DOES IGNORANCE MAKE YOU DESERVING?




REVENGE AIN'T A SIMPLE BUSINESS.

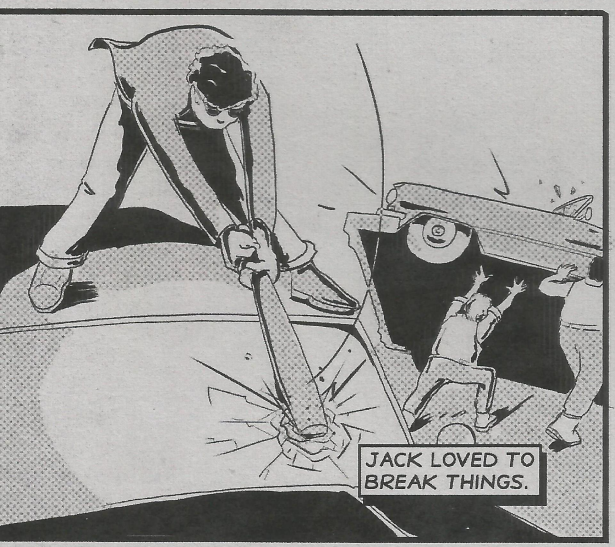

YOU CAN KILL THE MAN WHO WRONGED YOU.

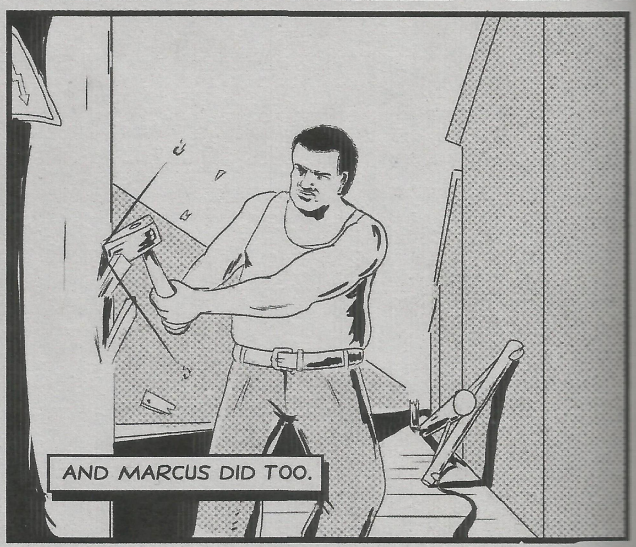


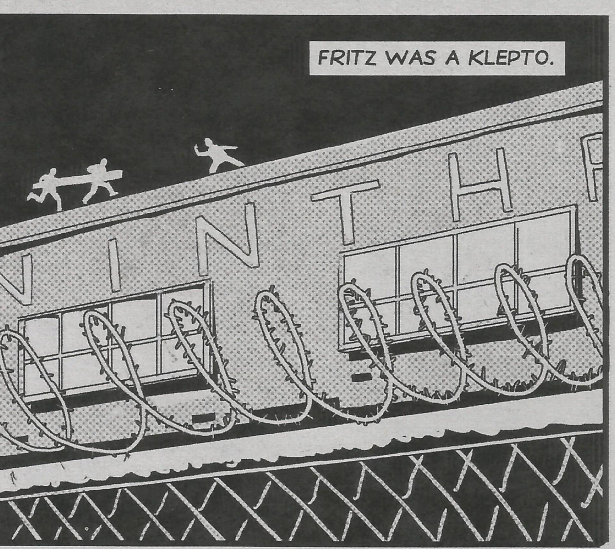

BUT WHAT ABOUT THE WRONGS YOU DONE YOURSELF?

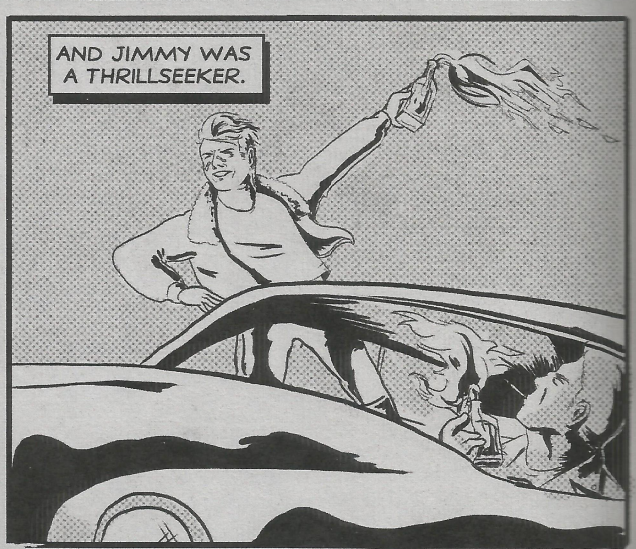
COBB WAS ON A MISSION, BUT EVEN HE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT IT WAS.
HE STOPPED AT EVERY HONKY TONK, SERVICE STATION OR MOM 'N' POP WITH AN EYE OUT FOR THE SCARIEST-LOOKING SONS OF BITCHES.
86 MILES
HE'D PICK A FIGHT, OR JUST PUNCH 'EM AS HARD AS HE COULD OUT OF THE CLEAR BLUE. HE WAS LOOKING FOR SOMETHING.
YOU PICKED THE WRONG GUY TO MESS WITH TODAY, YOU MISERABLE PIECE OF SHIT!
YOU'D HAVE TO BE CRAZY TO FIGHT KENNY!
HE'D PROBABLY KILL YA IF YOU LET HIM.
I'VE SEEN HIM KNOCK AN EYE OUT!

WHERE'D YOU LEARN TO FIGHT LIKE THAT, KENNY?
PUNCH ME AGAIN AND I'LL SHOW YA.
I AIN'T DIGGING YOUR GRAVE, COBB. THE COYOTES CAN HAVE YOU.
WHAT THE HELL ARE WE STANDING AROUND FOR? WE'VE BARELY TERRORIZED THIS PIECE OF SHIT TOWN!

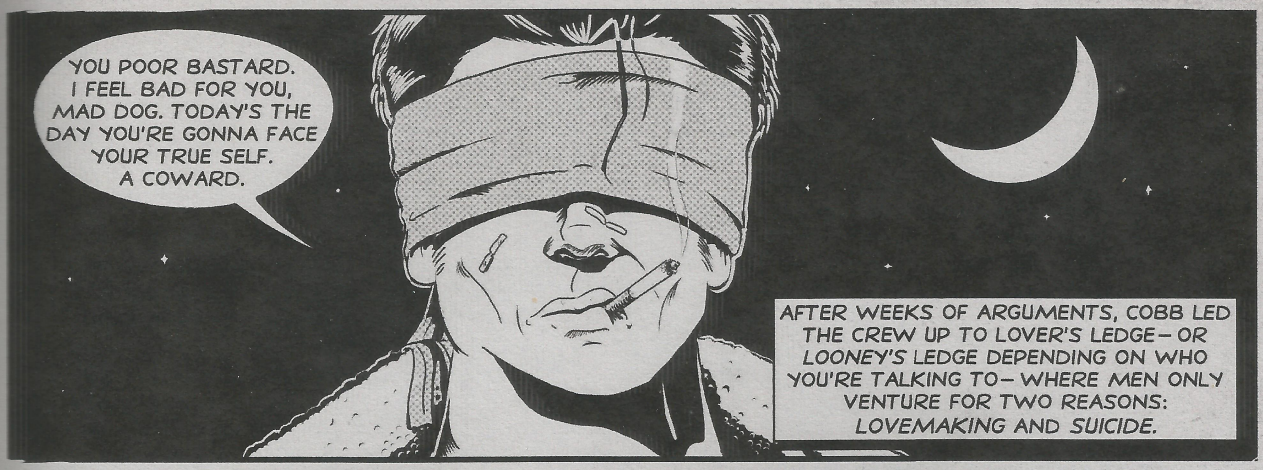

JACK LOVED TO BREAK THINGS.

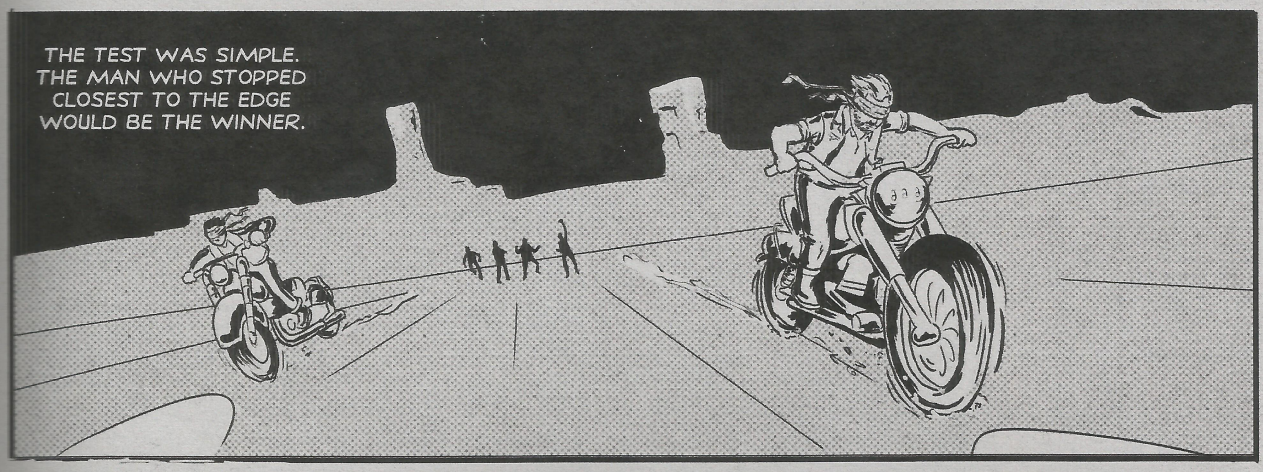

AND MARCUS DID TOO.

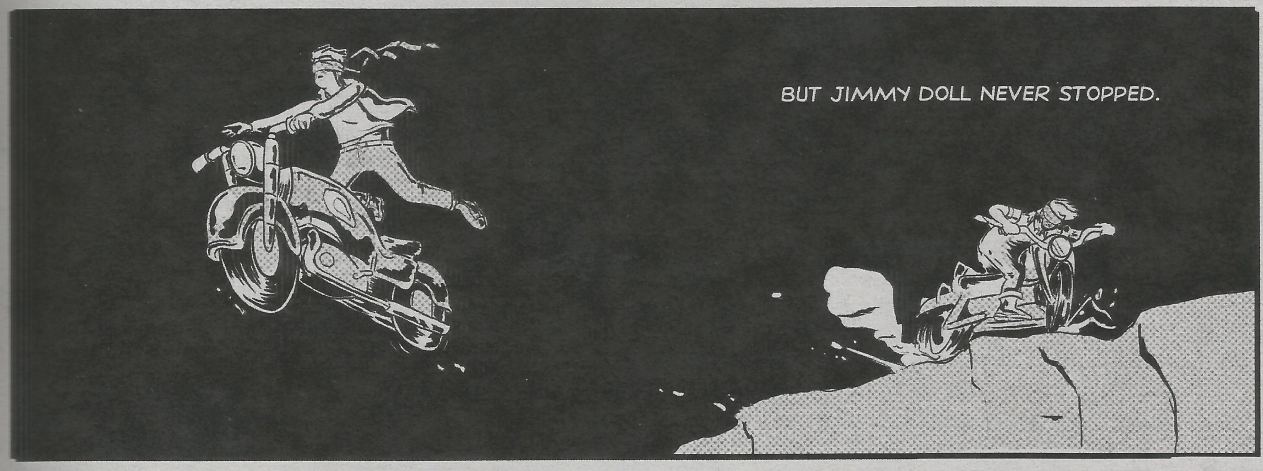

FRITZ WAS A KLEPTO.

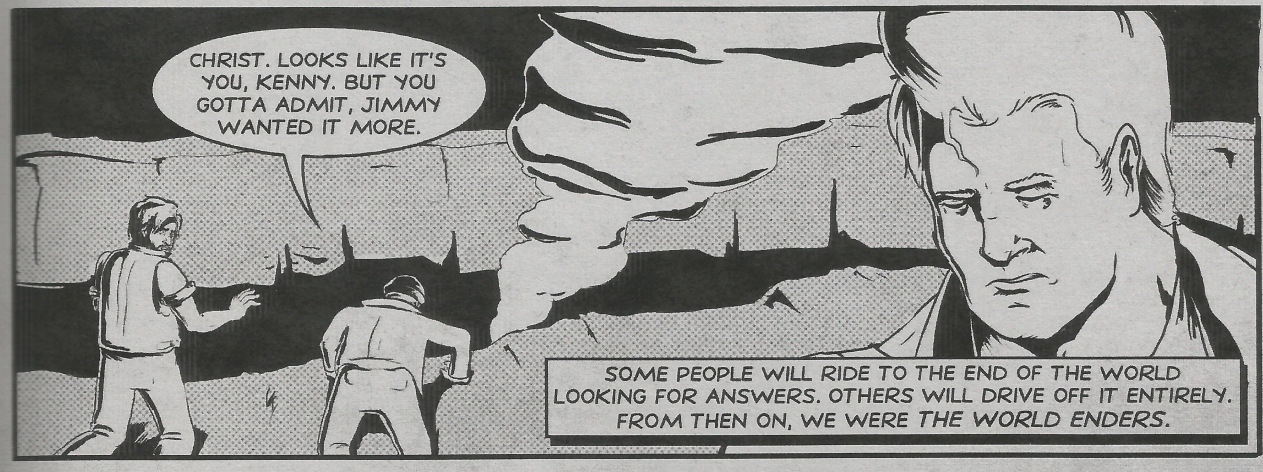

AND JIMMY WAS A THRILLSEEKER.

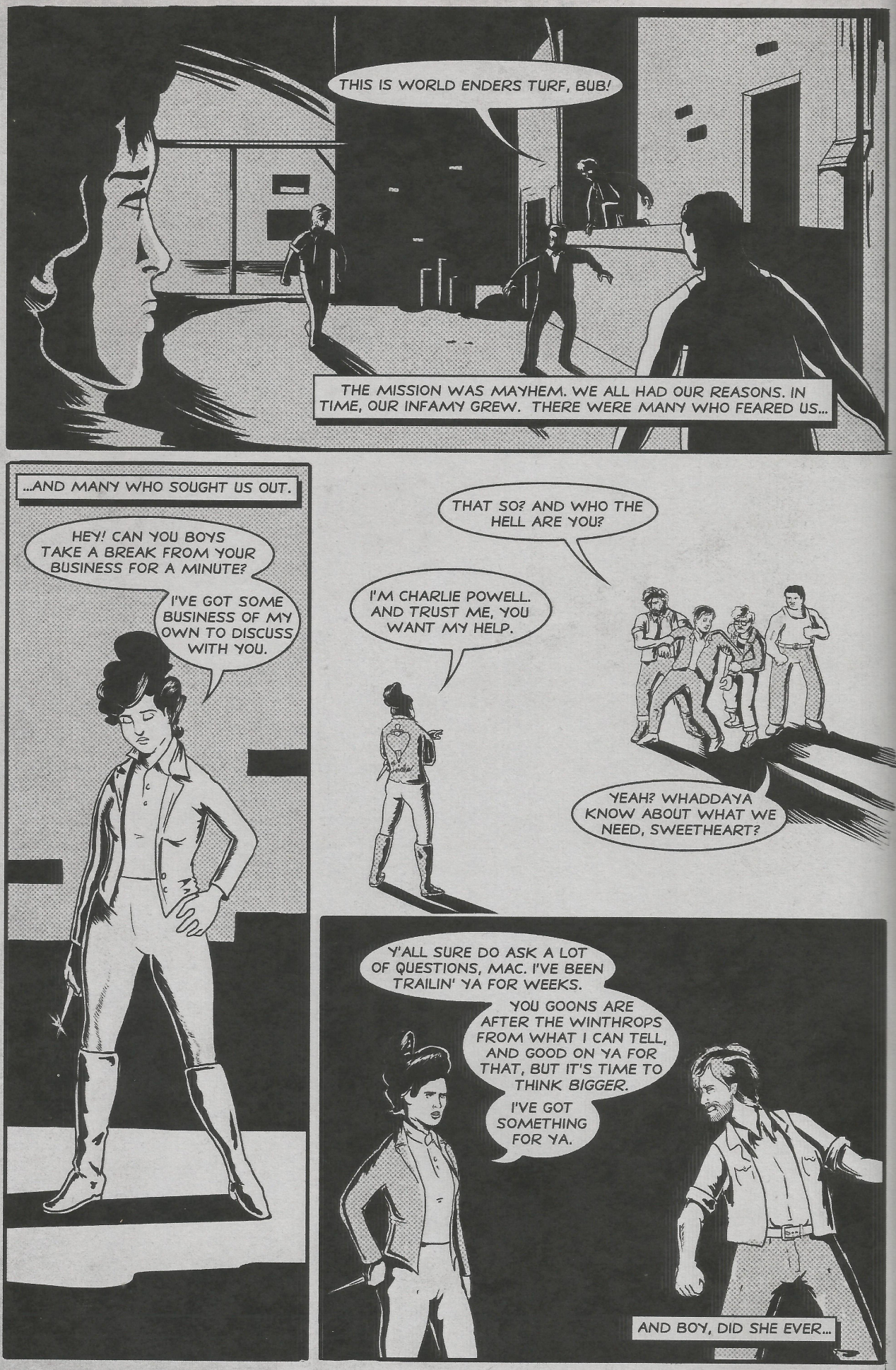
IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE COBB NEEDED A SECOND-IN-COMMAND, SOMEONE TO MANAGE THE BOYS FROM TIME TO TIME.
MAD DOG KENNY AND JIMMY DOLL BOTH BELIEVED THEMSELVES TO BE THE MAN FOR THE JOB.

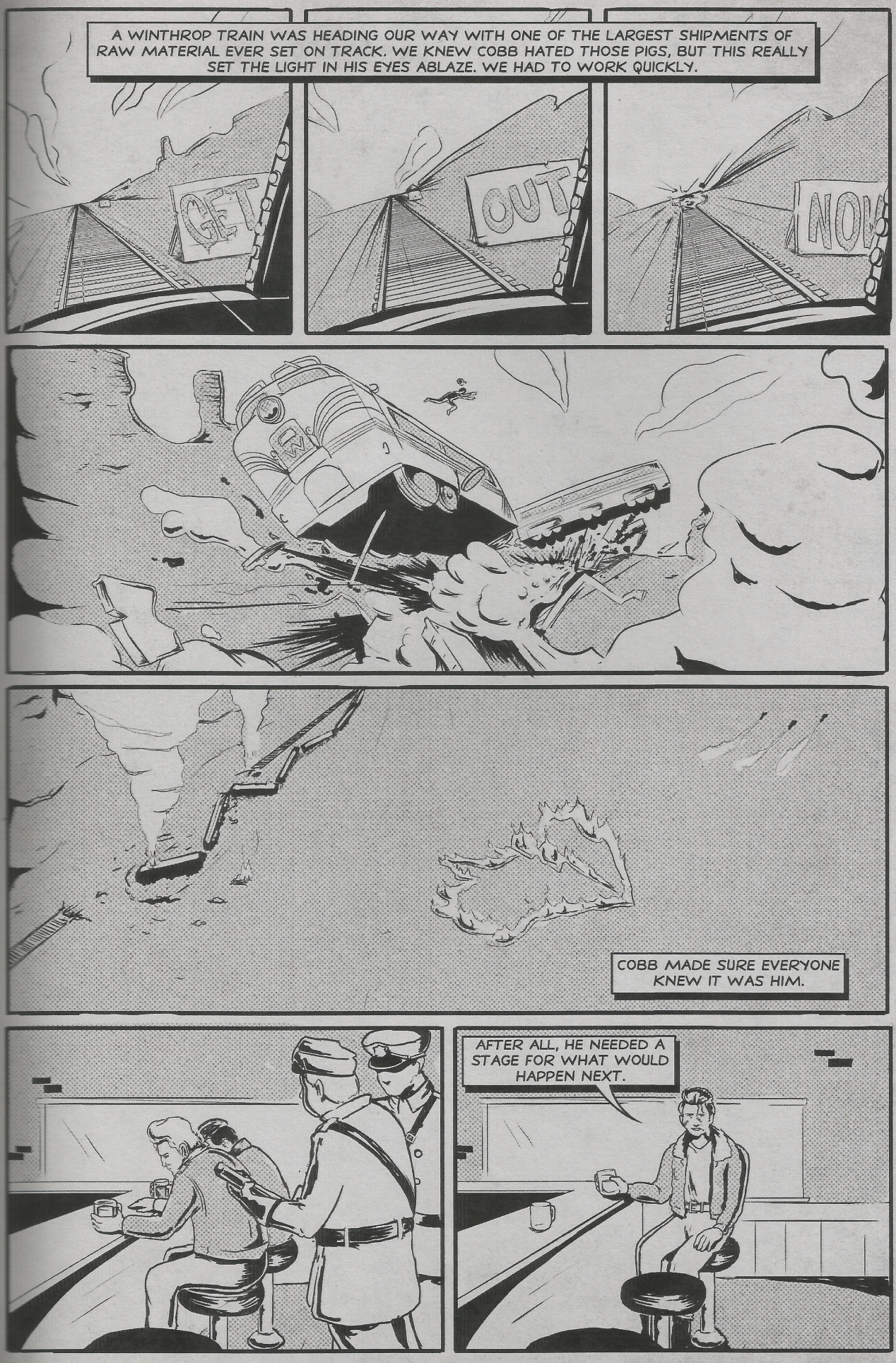

YOU POOR BASTARD. I FEEL BAD FOR YOU, MAD DOG. TODAY'S THE DAY YOU'RE GONNA FACE YOUR TRUE SELF. A COWARD.
AFTER WEEKS OF ARGUMENTS, COBB LED THE CREW UP TO LOVER'S LEDGE– OR LOONEY'S LEDGE DEPENDING ON WHO YOU'RE TALKING TO– WHERE MEN ONLY VENTURE FOR TWO REASONS: LOVEMAKING AND SUICIDE.

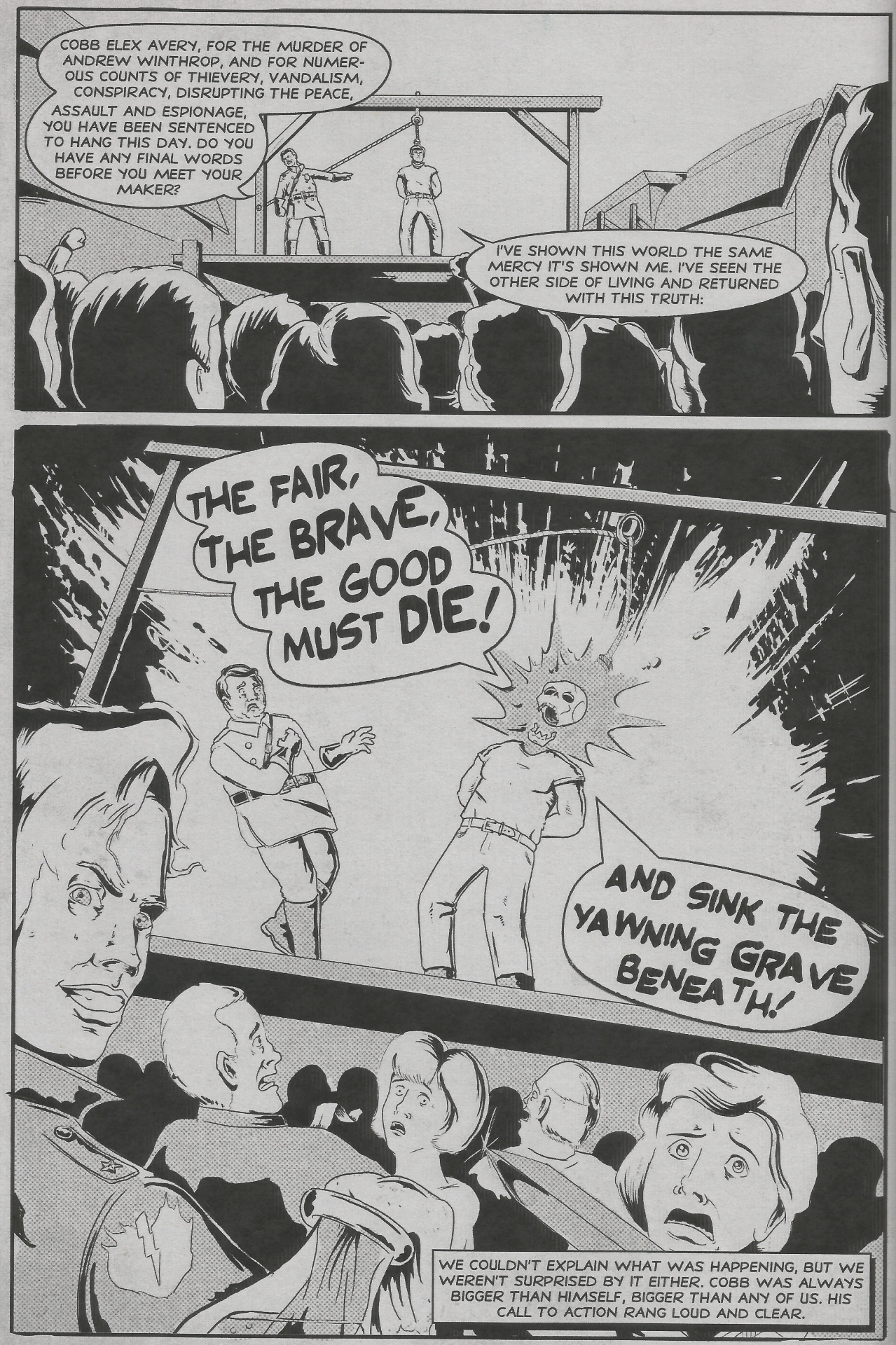

THE TEST WAS SIMPLE. THE MAN WHO STOPPED CLOSEST TO THE EDGE WOULD BE THE WINNER.

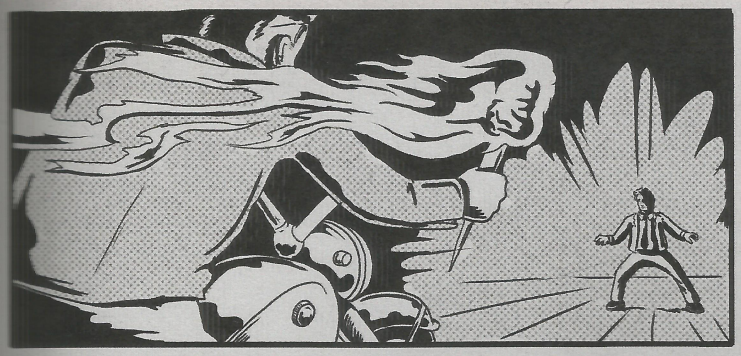

BUT JIMMY DOLL NEVER STOPPED.

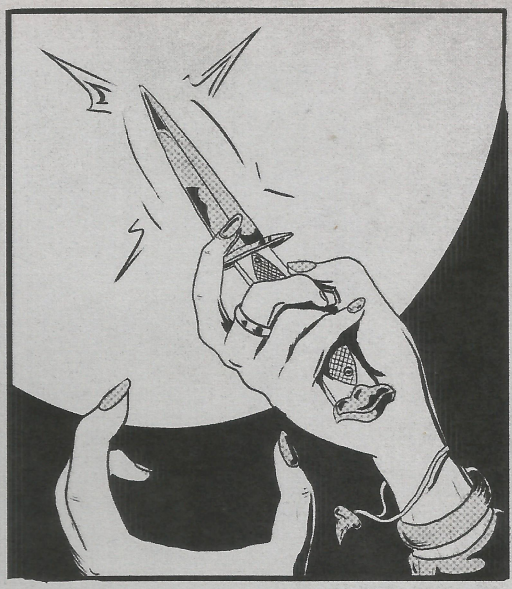

CHRIST. LOOKS LIKE IT'S YOU, KENNY. BUT YOU GOTTA ADMIT, JIMMY WANTED IT MORE.
SOME PEOPLE WILL RIDE TO THE END OF THE WORLD LOOKING FOR ANSWERS. OTHERS WILL DRIVE OFF IT ENTIRELY. FROM THEN ON, WE WERE THE WORLD ENDERS.

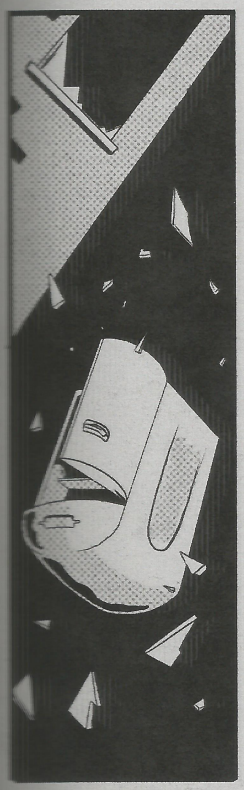

THIS IS WORLD ENDERS TURF, BUB!
THE MISSION WAS MAYHEM. WE ALL HAD OUR REASONS. IN TIME, OUR INFAMY GREW. THERE WERE MANY WHO FEARED US...
...AND MANY WHO SOUGHT US OUT.
HEY! CAN YOU BOYS TAKE A BREAK FROM YOUR BUSINESS FOR A MINUTE?
I'VE GOT SOME BUSINESS OF MY OWN TO DISCUSS WITH YOU.
THAT SO? AND WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?
I'M CHARLIE POWELL. AND TRUST ME, YOU WANT MY HELP.
YEAH? WHADDAYA KNOW ABOUT WHAT WE NEED, SWEETHEART?
Y'ALL SURE DO ASK A LOT OF QUESTIONS, MAC. I'VE BEEN TRAILIN' YA FOR WEEKS.
YOU GOONS ARE AFTER THE WINTHROPS FROM WHAT I CAN TELL, AND GOOD ON YA FOR THAT, BUT IT'S TIME TO THINK BIGGER.
I'VE GOT SOMETHING FOR YA.
AND BOY, DID SHE EVER...

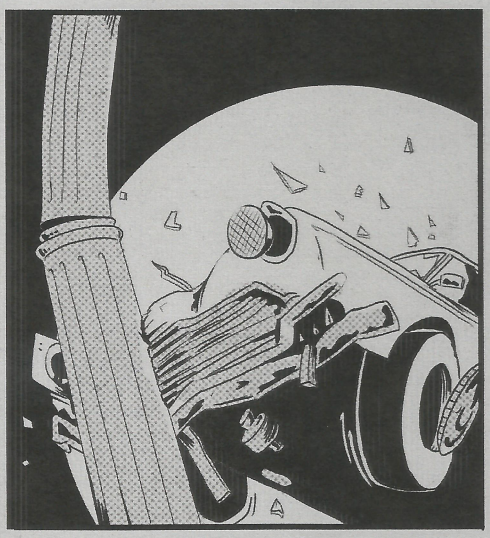

A WINTHROP TRAIN WAS HEADING OUR WAY WITH ONE OF THE LARGEST SHIPMENTS OF RAW MATERIAL EVER SET ON TRACK. WE KNEW COBB HATED THOSE PIGS, BUT THIS REALLY SET THE LIGHT IN HIS EYES ABLAZE. WE HAD TO WORK QUICKLY.
GET
OUT
NOW
COBB MADE SURE EVERYONE KNEW IT WAS HIM.
AFTER ALL, HE NEEDED A STAGE FOR WHAT WOULD HAPPEN NEXT.

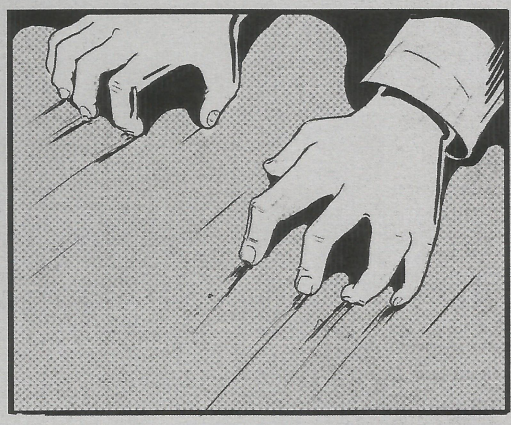

COBB ELEX AVERY, FOR THE MURDER OF ANDREW WINTHROP, AND FOR NUMEROUS COUNTS OF THIEVERY, VANDALISM, CONSPIRACY, DISRUPTING THE PEACE, ASSAULT AND ESPIONAGE, YOU HAVE BEEN SENTENCED TO HANG THIS DAY. DO YOU HAVE ANY FINAL WORDS BEFORE YOU MEET YOUR MAKER?
I'VE SHOWN THIS WORLD THE SAME MERCY IT'S SHOWN ME. I'VE SEEN THE OTHER SIDE OF LIVING AND RETURNED WITH THIS TRUTH:
THE FAIR, THE BRAVE, THE GOOD MUST DIE!
AND SINK THE YAWNING GRAVE BENEATH!
WE COULDN'T EXPLAIN WHAT WAS HAPPENING, BUT WE WEREN'T SURPRISED BY IT EITHER. COBB WAS ALWAYS BIGGER THAN HIMSELF, BIGGER THAN ANY OF US. HIS CALL TO ACTION RANG LOUD AND CLEAR.

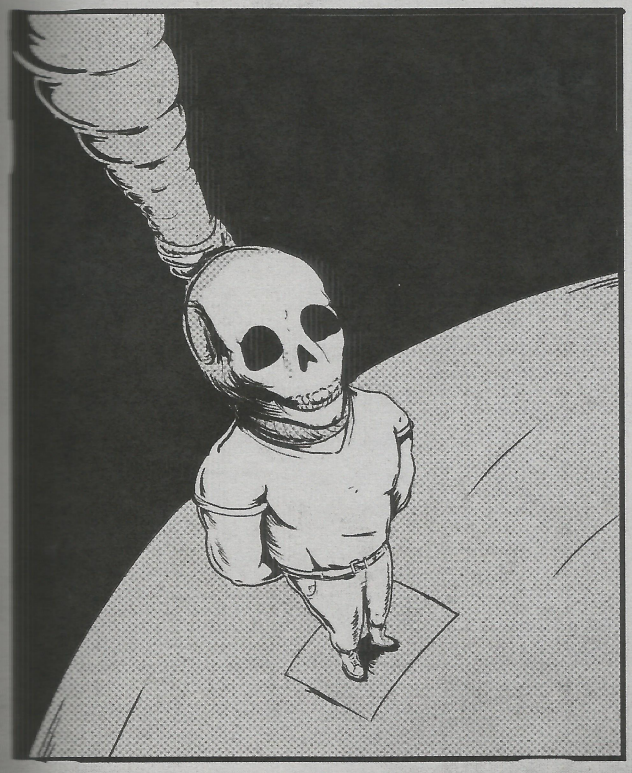


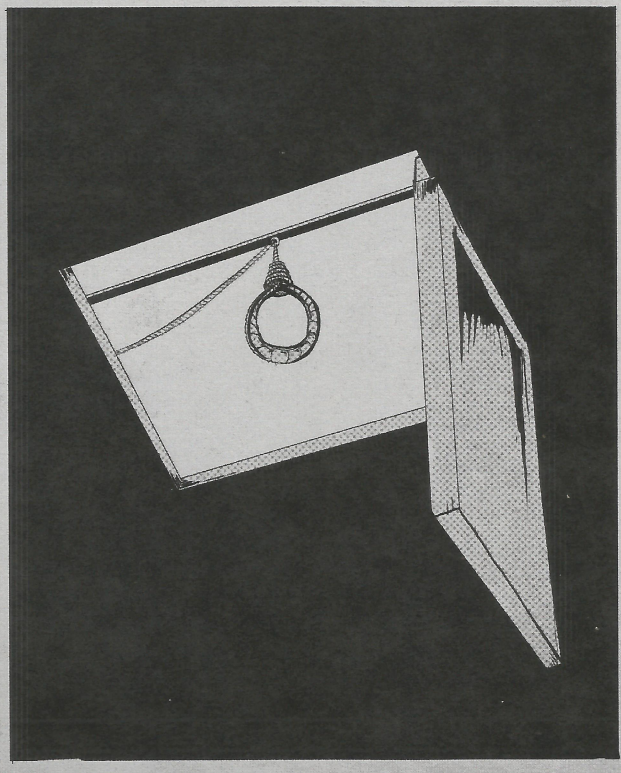












THE DESTRUCTION WAS SO SEVERE, IT ROUSED THE SINKHOLE THAT ATE UP COBB'S LIFE. IN THE END, IT SWALLOWED THAT TOWN WHOLE.
WE CARRY THAT CHASM WITH US EVEN NOW. WE ARE THE WORLD ENDERS. UNITED IN PURPOSE, ALONE ON THE ROAD. AND WE'LL BE HERE UNTIL WE'RE THE ONLY ONES LEFT.

THE WORLD ENDERS

The Fair, The Brave, The Good Must Die

I. Dismantle, Destroy, and Disobey

II. Leave no Challenge Unanswered

III. Revile the Powerful, Abhor the Weak

IV. Surrender to No One, not even Death